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**ABSTRACT**

Methods and apparatus are described which provide secure interactive communication of the text and image information between a central server computer and one or more client computers, located at remote sites for the purpose of storing and retrieving files describing and identifying unique products, services or individuals. Textual information and image data from one or more of the remote sites are stored separately at the location of the central server computer, with the image data being compressed, and the textual information included in a relational database with associated image identifiers. The central computer has the capability for independent management of both image and textual data, to ensure that all information can be independently retrieved. Requests are made from remote terminals to the central server computer, with the capability of processing multiple, simultaneous requests. Upon a request from a remote terminal, textual and associated image data are recalled and downloaded for review. Various forms of data and image formatting may be employed, including encryption techniques to maintain the security of the data. The server computers may be interlaced with other computers, to provide for the capability for entering images associated with financial transactions, so that they may be accessed as permanent records of the system.